



*S. P. 1700
W. W.*

THE *Sly*
SULTANESS:
A
TRAGEDY.

As it is Acted at the
Theatre - Royal
IN
D R U R Y - L A N E,
BY
His MAJESTY's Servants.

Charles
By Mr. JOHNSON. R

The SECOND EDITION.

L O N D O N :

Printed by W. WILKINS, for J. BROWN, at the
Black Swan without Temple-Bar; W. HINCHLIFFE,
at *Dryden's-Head* under, and J. WALTHOE, Jun.
against, the *Royal-Exchange* in *Cornhill*.

M DCC XVII.

(Price One Shilling Six-Pence.)



Wm. THE *Dryden*
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39/6



PROLOGUE.

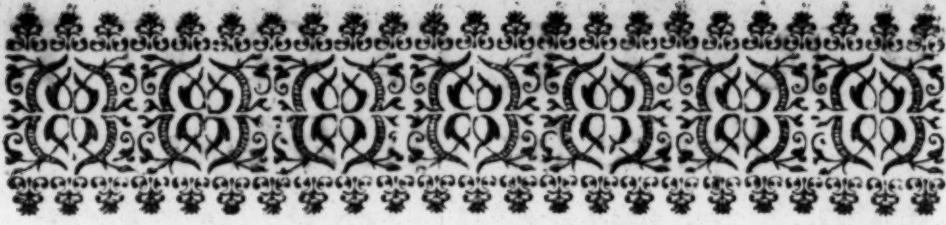
Spoke by Mr. Wilks.

ON this small Tract of Boards, this Timber Plain,
Where Mirth and Sadness take their Turns to reign :
We strive to please a thousand different Ways,
And shew the Business of Mankind in Plays :
What Loves have we inspir'd ? What Virtues taught ?
What Wrongs redress'd ? What bloody Battles fought ?
The Tragic Muse has with unweary'd Toil,
Thro' ev'ry Age, and every distant Soil,
Search'd after Heroes ; ransack'd Greece and Rome,
And rais'd our British Monarchs from the Tomb.

Of all the Great, unhappy Names of Old,
There scarce remains one Story now untold.
This Night, two Lovers of our Age we show,
A sad true Tale, a Modern Scene of Woe ;
Yet, that our Heroe may affect you more,
We bring him from the distant Turkish Shore :
Then, think not that the Theme too fresh appears ;
A thousand Leagues, are like a thousand Years.

Our honest Author frankly bid me say,
'Tis to the Great Racine he owes his Play :
When Rome in Arms had gain'd immortal Fame,
And proudly triumph'd o'er the Grecian Name,
Her Poets copy'd what Athenians writ,
And boasted in the Spoils of foreign Wit :
Why then shou'd Britons, who so oft have broke
The Pride of Gaul, and bow'd her to the Yoke ;
Be blam'd, if they enrich their native Tongue
With what the Gallick Muse has greatly sung :
At least, 'tis hop'd, he'll meet a kinder Fate,
Who strives some Standard Author to translate,
Than they, who give you, without once repenting,
Long-labour'd Nonsense of their own inventing.
Such Wags have been, who boldly durst adventure
To Club a Farce by Tripartite-Indenture :
But, let them share their Dividend of Praise,
And their own Fools-Cap wear, instead of Bays.

EPI.



E P I L O G U E.

Spoke by Mrs. Santlow.

ADIES, you now perhaps may want Relief,
And wake with Pleasure from a Dream of Grief ;
When Bajazer had left his Dear behind him,
You see how much in haste, she dy'd to find him :
Commend me to the Turks for lasting Love,
When once on Earth begun; it never ends above.
---- But there's one Blot, the Criticks may insist on,
They'll say, we make our Turk too good a Christian :
They are not quite so bad as you believe,
You talk of Vertue, but they vertuous live.
Even the Seraglio, stock'd with Royal Game,
Is not so vile in Practice, as in Fame ;
There but One Man dares hunt, or brush a Feather ;
And he, perhaps, ---- no mighty Sportsman neither :
That Place ---- believe me Christians, 'tis most true,
Is chaster than a Nunnery with you.
----- Yet wherefore shou'd I boast ? the Turbant Sway
Is absolute ----- they tremble and obey :
----- Ay ---- 'tis a comfortable Thing to be,
Whate'er you think on't, British Ladies, free :
Yes, England is the Paradise for Beauty,
Here not one Heart i'th' Island but is true t'ye ;
You, to your lasting Glory disapprove
All Tyranny ----- that does not rise from Love.
Here but One Man is Master of One Wife,
No Slave, but his Companion during Life ;

Takes

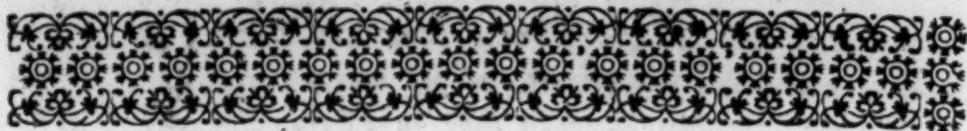
E P I L O G U E.

Takes her to Church, gives her a Ring and Purse ;
To have and hold, for better and for worse :
Nay, if the Freeborn Woman takes a Fancy,
In a close Hack, to sip a Dram of Nantcy ;
Or with a Friend, to eat a Bit in private,
'Tis what no Man of Sense but does Connive at.
Yes, he's oblig'd by Law, while he resides
Within four Seas, to keep what she provides.

You've Balls --- Assemblies --- Masquerades and Plays,
And all your Bridal Years --- are Holy-days :
Well ----- O' my Conscience, were there nought to stop
Their Flight ; -- the whole Seraglio wou'd Elope ;
Attempt to Rival you, in all your Charms,
And take a Refuge in the British Arms :
There where the Sultan, their half-vanquish'd Lord,
Flies for Protection from Eugenio's Sword,
To distant Britain's Prince, who wise and great,
In equal Balance, holds Europa's Fate :
From him contending Nations seek Redress,
He bids, like Jove, the warring Thunder cease,
And regulates this shatter'd Orb in Peace.



Per-



Persons of the *DRAMA.*

Bajazet, Brother to Sultan *Amurat.* Mr. Booth.

Roxana, The Sultaness. Mrs. Porter.

Atalida, A Daughter of the House of
Ottoman. } Mrs. Oldfield.

Acomat, Grand Vizier. Mr. Mills.

Osmyn, Creature of the Vizier. Mr. Rian.

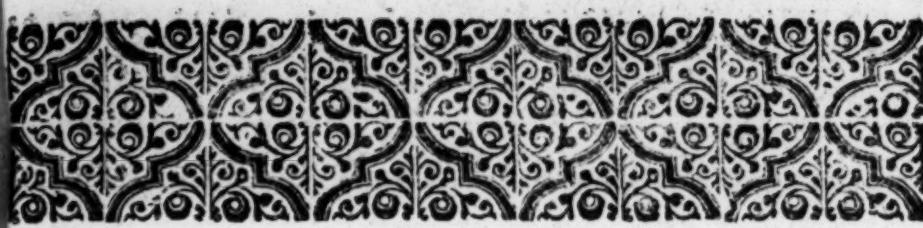
Zatima, Slave to the Sultaness. Mrs. Baker.

Zara, Slave to *Atalida.* Mrs. Garnet.

S C E N E

Constantinople (formerly called *Byzantium*) within
the Seraglio of the Grand Seignior.

T H E



THE SULTANESS.

ACT I. SCENE I.

Acomat, Osmyn.



ERE, Osmyn, we may reason un-
observ'd.
The Sultaness, from yonder high-
rais'd Terras,
Views the wide Euxine, and en-
joys the Breeze.

Osm. Where am I, Vizier ! Whither do you lead me ?
Tis Death to breathe within these Walls ; this Place
Our Earthly Gods hold Sacred : The Seraglio
Is fenc'd by Mahomet's severest Laws :
Tis Sacrilege, 'tis Height of Prophanation,
For vulgar Feet to tread where the dread Race
Of Ottoman is form'd — But tell me, General,
How durst those tongueless Slaves, who guard this
In dreadful Silence open to your Signal ? (Palace
I dare no further press.

Acom. Yet check a while
Thy curious Fears : I am thy Guide. Say, Osmyn,

B

Why

2 *The SULTANESS.*

Why didst thou suffer *Acomat* thus long
To wait thy needful Presence in *Byzantium*?
What Seas, what Sands, what Dangers hast thou cross'd
To serve thy Friend? What Tidings of Importance
What Secret dost thou bring? What of our Army?
What of our Sultan knowest thou? Open all.
Speak, *Osmyn*: Ease my impatient Heart: Thy own
Thy Vizier's Fate, the Fate of a whole Empire
Lies in thy Breast, and hangs upon thy Words.

Osm. Still *Babylon* stands faithful to her Prince:
Unshaken yet, she sees our Turban'd Hosts
Surround her Walls. Mean time the *Persians* arm:
From ev'ry Side their num'rous Bands advancing,
Move to her Aid, and each succeeding Morn
Gain on the Sight, and thicken to the View.
The *Sultan* weary'd with a fruitless Siege,
No more renews his vain Assaults; resolv'd
To wait their Arms before their lofty Bulwarks;
In one decisive Hour to try his Fate,
And fix at once the Empire of the East.

Acom. Go on, my Soldier: I am all Attention.

Osm. Since that, I little know. Long tedious League
Divide this City from the Camp; each Day
New Obstacles have cross'd my speedy Course,
And intercepted all my Diligence.

Acom. How do our Gallant Janizaries bear
Their great Imperial Master's jealous Eye?
Or is the Homage which they pay, sincere?

Osm. Proud *Amurat* puts on a pleasing Look,
And seems secure of Conquest; but in vain
He smooths his troubled Brow; the thin Disguise
Serves but to render him yet more suspected,
In vain he courts his hardy Janizaries:
Their Hearts are inaccessible: They think,
And think with secret Malice, on the Attempt
The *Sultan* made to break their Gallant Troops.
They fear him, Sir; and whom they fear, they hate.
I know they murmur at their Vizier's Absence;

And

The SULTANESS.

3

And oftentimes regret those Days of Glory,
When you conducted them to certain Conquest.

Acom. Dost thou then think, dear Osmyn, those bless'd
Days

Still swell their Hearts, and make them full of me?
Thinkst thou they still will follow where I lead,
And recognize once more their Vizier's Voice?

Osm. Fortune alone will regulate their Conduct:

If happy Amurat should prove victorious,
Lowly they'll cringe, and bow with base Obedience.
But, if hard Fate should blight his blooming Glory,
And make the Foe prevail, to their Disgrace,
Restiff and Mutinous they'll loudly murmur,
And call the Chance of War a Stroke from Heav'n.

But say, my Vizier; for three Moons are wain'd
Since thro' the Camp, a doubtful Rumour spread:
'Twas said a Slave then posted to Byzantium,
Charg'd with some secret Message of Importance,
Our Hearts all trembl'd for young Bajazet;
We fear'd those Orders brought him certain Death;
That jealous Amurat requir'd his Head.

Acom. The Slave arriv'd, produc'd his fatal Orders:
But all in vain.—

Osm. What! were they not obey'd?
How will he dare to lift his guilty Eyes
To his dread Master's Face? How will he dare
To tell him his Commands were disobey'd?

Acom. That Slave is now no more: In the deep
Plung'd, he rests beneath the Waves. (Euxine

Osm. —— Hah, Vizier!

'Twas rashly done. Stern Amurat impatient,
Will search the Cause, and soon chaffise the Insult.
How will you answer this?

Acom. I have not Time
To think on such a Trifle. Cares more weighty,
Of more Importance, fill each busie Moment.
I know fierce Amurat has sworn my Ruin:
Osmyn, when he returns, I die. The Sultan

B 2

Has

4 The SULTANESS.

Has labour'd to estrange the Soldiers Hearts
From their old Leader.— Yes, he seeks the Field,
The bloody Field, without his Vizier's Aid,
And leaves me here to drone away my Days
In Idleness and Ease, the fat Lieutenant
Of Luxury and Wealth, this City's Ruler.
But I more worthily employ'd my Leisure ;
Have wrought him weighty Toils ; a thousand Cares,
A thousand Fears, as many jealous Doubts
Shall break at once upon his Quiet, *Osmyn*.
The glorious Treason soon will reach his Ears,
And sting him to the Soul.

Osm. What have you done ?
My Soul's alarm'd.

Acom. This Day, this very Day,
Roxana will declare for *Bajazet*,
And place him on her absent Sultan's Throne.

Osm. Roxana, Sir, whom *Amurat* has chose,
And singled from the Beauties of the Earth ?
The brightest Virgins of the Female World
Shine in his Court ; yet he prefers *Roxana* :
Her Charms alone prevail'd to fix his Love ;
Therefore he stil'd her *Sultaneſſ* and Queen,
E're yet she paid the wonted pledge, an Heir
To prop the Throne, and lengthen out his Race,
The Race of *Ottoman*, our Prophet's Lineage.

Acom. Yet farther does he honour her, she Rules
During his Absence with unquestion'd Power.
Thou know'st our Empire's jealous Policy ;
A Brother seldom sees his Brother Reign,
'Tis fatal to be near ally'd to Thrones.

Secure of Life, his Brother *Ibrahim*,
Not conscious of his Birth, breathes listless on ;
Abandon'd to the Hands that reach him Food,
Unworthy equally to Live or Dye.

But *Bajazet*, with nobler Spirits warm'd,
Employ's the Sultan's Envy and his Fear :
That Godlike Prince disdain'd to waste his Youth

In

The SULTANESS.

5

In slothful Ease ; even from his Infancy
Has he been train'd in Camps to Manly Toils,
I taught him first to wield the shining Sabre.
Thou hast beheld him rush into the War,
And push the firm Battalia ; thou hast seen
Our Gallant *Fanizaries* catch his Fire,
And turn the doubtful Battle : Big with Glory,
Oft have I press'd the Hero in these Arms,
When his warm Heart was flush'd with that sweet Joy,
Which the first Conquests give a youthful Warrior.
O!. Oh, that his Virtues grac'd our Prophet's Throne !

Acom. His Virtues have made *Amurat* his Foe ;
And tho' he has not lopp'd this only Hope,
This Promise of the Race of *Ottoman* ;
Yet basely clos'd within these Walls he keeps
The Youth a Pris'ner, and has made his Life,
That Life on which our *Mosques*, our Prophet's *House*,
Our *Laws*, our *Empire* hangs, to hold its Being
Precarious on a *Woman's* Will : *Roxana*
Reigns absolutely Mistress of his Fate.

Therefore concealing my Designs, I wrought
The Queen to favour *Bajazet*. At first
I gave her Doubts, and fill'd her Mind with Fears :
I show'd her *Amurat*'s Return uncertain,
The Strength and Numbers of the *Persian* Host,
The Murmurs of our Camp, the Chance of Arms :
I mourn'd the Prince's Fate : I set before her
His Godlike Form, his Youth, his Manly Soul :
She sigh'd and catch'd the Passion as I spoke,
And from that Moment wish'd to see her Pris'ner.

Osm. How durst she break at once thro' all those
Guards,

Whose watchful Eyes observe this awful Palace ?

Acom. Thou mayst have heard perhaps a faithless
Rumour

Ran thro' *Byzantium* of the Sultan's Death :

Roxana with her Fears improv'd th' Alarm ;

Within

Within this Palace all was in Confusion,
 The People call'd for *Bajazet* to Reign :
 Then, then his Life grew dangerous to the Sultan;
Roxana saw the Prince, nor cou'd conceal
 The fatal Orders given by *Amurat* :
 She show'd young *Bajazet*, his Death, his Life
 Depended on her Will. *Roxana's Eyes*
 Betray'd her Passion, soon the Prisoner snatch'd
 The bless'd Occasion, and secur'd his Life.
 All Things conspir'd ; their Loves, their Fears, their
 Interest,
 To join their Hearts and to unite their Counsels.

Osm. What ! Does the whole Seraglio know their
 Loves ?

Acom. Not the most watchful Mute suspects their
 Passion.

The fair, the soft *Atalida* receives
 His ardent Vows, and bears them to *Roxana* :
 That Virgin, to our Prophet's House ally'd,
 Bred with the Prince, and Nurs'd within these Walls
 Assists the Lovers to conceal their Flame,
 And feigns that Tenderness *Roxana* feels ;
 While *Bajazet* and the Sultana Queen
 Both promise the young Princess to my Vows.

Osm. How, *Vizier* ! are you grown a Lover then

Acom. Canst thou believe, dear *Osmyn*, at this Age
 I'll serve a vile Apprenticeship to Love,
 And to a Woman's Will inthral my Manhood ?
 Think'it thou this Heart, steel'd with Fatigue a

Years,

Harden'd in thirty Winters Camps, can stoop
 To sigh and whine and dote upon a Face ?
 No, no, thy *Vizier* rises in his Views,
 A more exalted Passion fires my Breast.

I love in her the Blood from whence she springs ;
Atalida will, by her Name, secure
 My tow'ring Hopes ; from these old Loins may rise
 An Heir to mount the Throne of *Mahomet* !

The SULTANESS.

7

O/
n.
Os. Oh, my lov'd General, greatly have you laid
The glorious Scheme; it animates my Soul.

Acom. Thou know'st, our Sultans of their Viziers
jealous,

Thro' Fear or Avarice cut short their Days.

Tho' *Bajazet* now courts me as his Friend,
(For Danger wakens Love) yet he, this *Bajazet*,
Once fix'd upon the Throne, may lay me by,
An idle Instrument of no Regard.

And should my Councils thwart his Sov'reign Will,
Or some untoward Humour stir his Choler,

And he demand my Head — I say no more,
I would not fail in Duty to my Prince,

Nor forfeit the Great Trust I hold beneath him :

But if, in some capricious Mood, his Power
Commands me not to Be — I boldly own,
I am not of that slavish vulgar Make,

To kneel, and bow my Head, and blesst the Bowstring.

O/
m. Bravely resolv'd — but wherefore wait we
here ?

Acom. Behold this Place, that private Portal opens
On the *Sultana's* Bath ; hither a Slave,

Thro' those dark winding Labyrinths that we pass'd,
Conducted first my Steps : and here *Roxana*,

Free from importunate and busie Spies,

AgUnfolds her secret Soul, and hears my Thoughts
Without Restraint: Behold, ev'n now she comes;

Your Empress comes ; and with her Fair *Atalida*,
Her faithful Friend. Stay, Soldier, and support
My Speech, while I relate the News you bring.

SCENE

SCENE II.

Acomat, Osmyn, Roxana, Atalida, Zatima and Zara;

Acomat to Roxana.

Truth does at last accord with publick Fame :
Osmyn has seen the Sultan and his Army.

Proud Amurat, dissatisfy'd and cruel,
Has lost the Soldiers Hearts : They loudly call
For Bajazet to reign. The Persian Armies
Are on their March, the Battles soon must joyn.
Perhaps ev'n now, on Babylon's wide Plain,
The mingling Squadrons bleed. Let us declare
For Bajazet, and save our sinking Nation.

The People idolize his very Name ;
They know his Vertue is his only Crime :
I have inflam'd their giddy Minds with Rumours,
That Amurat despairs this antient City,
And will remove his Presence and his Throne
Far from Byzantium. Now, Roxana, now,
Produce the Sultan's bloody Orders. Haste,
Shew to the Peoples longing Eyes a Prince,
Whose Godlike Form intitles him to Empire.

Rox. 'Tis well ! I will perform what I have purposed.
Brave Acomat, assemble all your Friends ; (mis)
And let me know their final Resolutions.
I'll see the Prince once more. I know not yet
But he despairs that Empire which I offer ;
For his cold Heart seems not to court my Bounty.
Go, and return with speed.

SCENE III.

Roxana, Atalida, Zatima, Zara.

Rox. Atalida !
This Moment shall decide my Destiny.

My Mind has long been rack'd with doubtful Hope.
The Prince this Moment shall declare his Love ;
To me declare.

Ata. Roxana can you doubt it ?
Haste and atchieve your glorious Work ; oh raise
The godlike Youth to Liberty and Empire,
Now while the Day yet lives, to Morrow's Sun
His Liberty, his Life, may not be yours,
If haughty *Amurat* returns victorious,
Your *Bajazet* must bleed. Oh think on that.
Do not suspect his Heart ; your eager Love
Is full of groundless Fears, I'll answer for him.

Roxa. You then shall answer for him. Speak, *Atalida* ;
Thinkst thou his Love sincere ?

Ata. Your generous Care,
What you have done, what you have Power to do,
His Danger and his Duty, all conspire
To fix his grateful Heart. Oh can you think,
Your bounteous Love will ever die within him ?

Roxa. Wou'd Heaven, for my Repose, I cou'd not
think it !
Has Love once touch'd his Heart ? How oft, my
Friend,
Have I receiv'd from thee his tender Vows ?
But when, assur'd and pleas'd, I saw the Prince
In secret ; say, my dear *Atalida*,
Did he not seem all frozen ? Cold Esteem
And distant Homage were the only Pledges
Of promis'd Love. —— Where was that youthful
Ardor,

With which you flatter'd my believing Heart ?
I tell thee, e're I give him Life and Empire,
I shall require more ample Proofs of Love.

Ata. What more can you require ?

Roxa. He shall espouse me.

This very Day I'll be his *Queen*, his *Wife*.

Ata. His *Wife* ! ---- Good Heav'n, how desperate
is your Purpose !

Roxa. I know our Empire's Laws are strong against me.

Proudly they speak, the Race of *Ottoman*
Shall ne'er be subject to the Bonds of Wedlock.
Tho' midst that Blaze of Beauty that attends him,
Our Sultan sometimes stoops to chuse a Fav'rite ;
Yet still no Royal Honours grace her Bed :
The Slave receives a Master in her Arms.
And when her Youth hath strengthen'd with an Heir
The Throne of Mahomet, this empty Name
Of Sultaness is added.

Atal. ——— *Amurat*

Disdain'd that you shou'd owe to ought but Love,
Your Titles. He has cloath'd them too with Power,
And made you Mistress of his Brother's Life.

Roxa. Yet *Amurat*, bound down by Forms of Law
Durst not crown all his Benefits with Marriage ;
The only Blessing my Ambition courted.
This I expect from *Bajazet* : for him
My Heart, my Friends, my Soldiers, People, Mutes
The Vizier, all are 'Traytors.

Ata. Can you think
To save distressful Virtue is a Crime ?

Roxa. Will he refuse to break this odious Law ?
Will he not join his Hand with mine in Wedlock ?
Shou'd he once pause or trifle with my Passion,
That Moment, without thinking how I love,
Tho' Death, Despair attend me, I'll shake off
These fond Desires ; and plunge him headlong down
The deep Abyss, that Dungeon of Distress,
From whence my Love has rais'd him. Go, *Atalid* !
Tell him, his Fate depends on his Compliance.

Ata. I'll bring you his Resolves.

Roxa. No, no, your Tongue
Expounds what he ne'er means. I'll see the Prince :
Tell him that Interview, that Point of Time,
Shall make us bless'd or wretched both for ever.

S C E N E

S C E N E IV.

Atalida and Zara.

Ata. Zara, 'Tis done, *Atalida* is lost.

Zara. Yet think, — — —

Ata. Alas, my Ruin lies before me :
And now my only Hope is my Despair.

Zara. But recollect.

Ata. Didst thou not hear *Roxana* ?
How hard the Terms on which his Life depends !
She says the Prince shall perish or espouse her.
If he submits to wed her, (Killing Thought !)
How can I bear his Loss ? Shou'd he refuse,
He dyes ---- Alas, how can I bear his Death ?

Zara. My Princess, you must still employ your Art
To feed *Roxana*'s Passion with false Hopes.

Ata. The Queen till now rely'd upon my Faith ;
Contented by my Eyes to see the Prince,
And hear him by my Speech --- Oh Zara ! Friend !
I am to blame (tho' Love and *Bajazet*
Shou'd both excuse me) to betray *Roxana*.

Zara. Think on your Rival's Power, and act with
Caution.

Ata. My Rival ! — Heaven ! What has the Ty-
rant's Power
To do in Love ? Are not our Souls united ?
before this fatal Passion seiz'd *Roxana*,
I lov'd the Prince ; his Wishes all were mine.
In early Infancy our Loves began,
And like Sepulchral Lamps, the sacred Flame
Has burnt in secret, clos'd within our Breasts,
Tis true, I join'd with her in all her Cares
To save his Life : When she no sooner saw
The Godlike Man (as who unmov'd can see him)
But all her Pride was soften'd into Love.
Surpriz'd, he bow'd, and thank'd her for Regards

Unmerited, unsought ; cou'd he do less ?
But she, deluded by her eager Passion,
Mistook his Courtesy, and call'd it Love.

Me, she confided in ; and plac'd me near him,
To breathe her Sighs, and warm his languid Heart.
Alas ! my Fear to loose him will destroy him !
My lavish Tongue has prais'd him to our Ruin.

Zara. Yet *Bajazet*, possess'd of Life and Empire,
May find a Time —

Ata. I must avow my Weakness :
A thousand Jealousies disturb my Rest :
My Rival courts him with a Train of Honours ;
Opposes Empire to my feeble Charms ;
And tempts his Youth with all the Pomp of Glory.
— My only Bribes — are Sighs, and silent Tears.
Yet, Zara, 'twill be nobler to controul
These Sighs and Tears, and join to crown my Hero.
— It shall be so ; — I'll counterfeit no more ;
I'll plead his Cause in earnest. But *Roxana*
Will soon be undeceiv'd : That gallant Prince
Knows not to feign — Her disappointed Heart
Will ravage all, and turn to Hatred, Murther :
— Ah ! whither will this wild Disorder drive me ?
He must not die — Can'st thou deserve, fond Maid,
That he shou'd perish for thee ? —

Zara. — Oh ! Conceal
These Tears, these jealous Pangs. They'll shew your
Roxana's Interview with Bajazet (Love.
Will settle all your Doubts. Look up to Heav'n :
The Virtues of your Prince will still protect him.

Ata. Oh ! thou, who do'st thy righteous Justice prove
On Crimes of Falshood ; if the Frauds of Love
Merit thy Wrath, yet soften the Decree ;
Save him, and aim the vengeful Bolt at me.

The End of the First A C T.

A C T.

A C T. II.

Bajazer, Roxana.

Roxa. PRINCE! the determin'd Hour at length is come,

Reserv'd by Heav'n and me to give you Freedom.

Nothing restrains me ; now, this very Moment,

I'll perfect the Design my Love has form'd.

I give into your Hands a mighty Empire :

But what I give, your Virtue must maintain.

Dangers will threaten ; but the Hero's Soul

Shines forth with double Lustre when oppos'd.

Osmyn has seen the Army --- they are yours :

The pious grave Expounders of our Laws

Have made your Cause, Religion; — *Acomat*

Commands this City : He's your faithful Creature.

That Crowd of Slaves and Mutes who guard this Palace,

Depend upon my Nod —— All Things are ready :

Bravely repulse your Brother's murthering Hand,

And wear his Crown. The Sons of *Mahomet*

Have oft ascended thus the Prophet's Seat.

One Favour I request ; one only Pledge,

For all this wond'rous Waste of Faith and Honour :

That you'll vouchsafe to let the hoary *Mufti*,

By sacred Wedlock, authorize my Conduct,

And sanctify the Faith my Love has given :

So shall the World applaud me when they see

What I perform'd for you, was for my Husband.

Baj. How, Madam !

Roxa. Wherefore do you start, my Lord ?

Is there a Bar between us and our Joys ?

Baj. You know our Empire, jealous of its Pow'r,

— Yet let me not repeat the ungrateful Law.

Roxa.

Roxa. I know when barb'rous *Bajazet* dethron'd
 Young *Ibrahim*,—the captiye Emperor
 Beheld his Spouse chain'd to the Victor's Car,
 And drag'd thro' *Asia* to adorn his Triumph.
 Since then, the *Sultans*, jealous of their Honour,
 Rarely submitted to the Nuptial Rites.
 But Love's a God-like Passion, that disdains
 Cold Policy and the dull Forms of State.
 Great *Solyman*, your glorious Ancestor,
 From whose triumphant Sword the vanquish'd Globe
 Receiv'd its Laws,—ev'n he, this *Solyman*
 Confess'd the Pow'r of *Roxilana's* Eyes.
 Fir'd with her Charms, at once the gen'rous Prince
 Rais'd the fair *Grecian* to his Bed and Throne.

Baj. 'Tis true; but when you look on me, *Roxana*,
 Think what I am, and what was *Solyman*:
 He Glorious, Great, in the full Tide of Pow'r;
Agypt, subdu'd, acknowledg'd him her Lord;
Rhodes, the stout Barrier to our growing Empire,
 Bow'd to his Sword; from *Perſia* to the *Danube*,
 The conquer'd Nations trembled at his Name.

But what am I? a Slave, who live by Bounty;
 Friendles, proſcrib'd, immur'd within these Walls;
 And only known to be, by my Misfortunes.

Shou'd I once loose those Hearts I seek to gain,
 Will they, when they shall see us sunk in Pleasures,
 Believe my Dangers, or your Tears sincere?

Deceive me not by *Solyman's* Example,
 But think on *Oſman's* Murther, wretched *Oſman*:
 His fatal Marriage justify'd the Deed,
 And authoriz'd Rebellion.—Yet a while
 Let us attend—First give me Pow'r and Freedom,
 And leave my Gratitude to pay the Debt.

Roxa. I understand you, Sir;—I am too rash;
 I fee, nothing escapes your prudent Foresight.
 Well have you weigh'd ev'n the minutest Danger,
 In which my thoughtless Passion wou'd engage you.

You coldly talk of Laws, of Honour, Fame ;
And raise imaginary distant Dangers.

But have you too foreseen the certain Ruin
That waits your Disobedience to my Will.
Know then, 'tis me you are to please or fear.
Remember, that this Palace is your Prifon ;
That I am sov'reign Mistress of your Fate ;
That you must cease to Live, when I to Love.

Baj. I hold my Life from you ; and I believe
You think it for your Glory to preserve me.
When you have plac'd the Scepter in my Hand,
My Heart, my Tongue shall own a just Allegiance ;
That dutious Homage, that respectful Friendship,
Which Gratitude demands. 'Tis true, my Life
Is yours ; but wou'd you wish ——

Roxa. No ! *Bajazet* ;
Cease to torment me with thy forc'd Respect.
I will no longer press you to consent.
Hence, then ; retire ; back to that joyless Prifon,
Whence my vain Love had freed a thankless Slave.
What means my struggling Heart ?— Can I demand
A stronger Proof than cold Indifference ?
Is he once mov'd ? tho' he beholds my Heart
Torn with distracting Pangs !—— No ; unconcern'd,
Unwarm'd, he tamely reasons with my Passion.

I see thy Purposes ; thou idly hop'st,
That, thus intangl'd in one Treason with thee,
I cannot, dare not, disengage our Interests.
But know, thy Brother loves me still.—His Heart
Is bound in mine.—Thy Death will sooth his Rage ;
And with thy Blood I'll expiate my Guilt.
That, that alone, will justify my Conduct !
It shall be done.—Thou dy'st, this very Now.

Oh ! *Bajazet*, I feel, I feel I love thee !
Do not destroy us Both ! Let me not go,
Drive me not out to Rage, to wild Depair !
If one rash Word, a Signal shou'd escape me,
Urg'd by thy cruel Usage, thou art lost.

Baj.

Baj. No, take my Life ; obey your Sultan's Orders.
My credulous Brother will reward the Crime,
And keep you still the Favourite of his Heart.

Roxa. His Heart ! his Heart ! injurious *Bajazet* !
Canst thou believe, when I have lost the hopes
Of reigning in thy Breast, I shall descend
To *Amurat* — And let a meaner Passion
Wear out — or but deform thy Image here ?

No, no, my Life is wreath'd in thine ; 'tis thine :
I furnish thee with Arms against my self.
I prithee do not triumph o'er my Weakness :
Alas, my Rage was all Excess of Fondness !
On thee depends my Life ; on thee my Death.
What is it stirs you thus, — your lab'ring Breast
Is full — say *Bajazet*.

Baj. 'Tis not the Loss
Of Life or Empire — but, I must speak.

Roxa. How then ? What say you ! there's some
hidden Cause,
Some dreadful Secret, which I know not yet :
Whatever Shape it wears, produce it ; speak !

Baj. Madam, the Choice is easie : Either raise
Your Pris'ner — and conduct him to the Throne ;
Or I attend the Word, receive your Victim.

Roxa. Enough, 'tis done ! -- You shall be satisfy'd
A Guard there. — — —

SCENE II.

Roxana, Acomat, Bajazet.

Roxa. Vizier, I have chang'd my Thoughts.
Remember, Sultan *Amurat*'s your Master.
Close all the Palace Gates, double the Guards ;
And on your Life let none presume to enter
Without the accustom'd Orders.

SCENE

SCENE III.

Acomat, Bajazet.

Acom. Bajazet!

My Prince ! What do I hear ? I stand confounded !
What have you done ? All, all our Hopes are ruin'd !
Whence this Disorder ? — Whom shall I accuse ?
Oh ! Heav'n ! —

Baj. The fatal Moment is arriv'd.

Roxana is offended : Vengeance follows.
You and your Friends must think of some Retreat.
I know how far my Friendship has expos'd you,
And hop'd one Day to recompence your Love :
But 'tis no more.

Acom. Whence rose this sudden Change ?

But now the whole *Seraglio* was in Peace ;
And now the Tempest roars, and wrecks us all.

Baja. She has commanded me to wed her.

Acom. How !

Our Priests will there oppose her ; yet, I think
The Custom is not authoriz'd by Reason ;
And shou'd be laid aside, when Self-defence
And Safety of the State plead strong against it.

Baja. Then must I to a Bond-Maid owe my Crown ?

Acom. Yet, Solyman, victorious Solyman.
Not press'd like you, with Dangers, deign'd to wed
His Captive Maid.

Baj. He was not bound like me :
What he perform'd, proceeded from his Choice :
His Slave, 'tis true, found Favour in his Eyes :
No base Necessity impos'd the Yoak ;
But, free from Obligations, Love alone
Made her a generous Present of his Heart.

Acom. But yet, you love Roxana ?

Baj. My Dear Vizier,

My Heart is wounded, and that Death thou seest,
Which points upon me, is my least Misfortune.
Oh ! that my Sword were drawn ! that in the Field
The bloody Field, we might contend like Men
For this Imperial Prize !— Brave *Acomat*,
Might I yet warm your Heart with such a Hope !
Alas ! I have but ill repaid your Love.

Acom. Yes ; if we perish now, you are the Cause.
Speak but one Word to save your self and us ;
But one kind Look wou'd calm *Roxana's* Brow.
The Janizaries watchful, wait my Word ;
The Priests, who rule at Will the giddy People,
Attend to guide you thro' the sacred Port,
Where first our Sultans make their Royal Entry.

Baj. Oh ! Vizier, *Acomat* ; if e're thy Prince
Was dear to thee, preserve me from this Debt,
This heavy Load of hated Benefits :
Let me not owe my Glory and my Life
To a vain Woman — Summon all thy Friends ;
Force the *Seraglio* — Thou shalt see thy *Bajazet*
Bleeding, and cover'd o'er with glorious Wounds,
Push thro' her num'rous Guards of *Mutes* and *Eunuchs*.

Acom. Constant they wait around, and watch each
Motion.

Oh ! be assur'd, she will secure her Vengeance ;
And on the first Alarm, your Life is lost ;
Thus all our Zeal to serve you, will be fruitless.
Promise to wed *Roxana*. — The fond Woman
Will trust your Word ; and when you're free —

Baj. How, Vizier !

Acom. Nay, redder not, nor check me with you
What ! Know you not the Sons of *Ottoman*. (Brow
Descend not to keep Faith with Slaves— Those Heroes
Your Ancestors, who, by the Right of Arms
Rul'd half the Globe, were Masters of their Oaths
And the State's Interest was their only Law.
This holy Throne of *Mahomet* was founded
On violated Leagues, and broken Treaties.

Baj. 'Tis base, 'tis most inglorious, Vizier!—No;
Dishonour waits on Perfidy. The Valiant
Shou'd blush to think a Falshood : 'Tis the Crime
Of Cowards—

Acom. Prince, my Soul applauds and loves you :
I must admire that Virtue which destroys me.
See, fair Atalida : — that beauteous Maid
Will join with me to save you from your self.

SCENE IV.

Bajazet, Atalida, Acomat.

Ata. Leave us, brave Acomat ; and try to moderate
Roxana's Rage. She now prepares her Vengeance :
She has herself, beheld the Palace Gates
All clos'd ; and we within, remain her Pris'ners.
Try all thy Eloquence ; exert thy Skill :
Haste : We have no Time to loose in idle Words.

SCENE V.

Bajazet, Atalida.

Baj. 'Tis fix'd, Atalida ; 'tis certain now,
That I must die, or never more be yours.
Why, am I held in these unworthy Bonds,
And tortur'd thus, to perish by Degrees ?
Oh ! beauteous Maid, behold th' unhappy Fruit
Of counterfeited Love ! — This I foretold :
But you wou'd have it so — Hide, hide your Passion :
Oh ! let not the Sultana see your Tears ;
They will betray you ; hence ; preserve your Life.

Ata. No, Bajazet : — Your Love, your Fondness
for me,
Too long have struggled with your Fate in vain.
I come determin'd, to surrender all
I hold most dear : Leave me, and reign ; Roxana

Claims you ; I must resign—

Baj. What say'st thou ? Leave thee !

Ata. 'Tis my Request.—I have consulted here ;
My Heart resolves it : --- Tho' ten thousand Pangs,
Ten thousand jealous Torments rend my Bosom,
My Heart resolves it ; Once I thought with Horror,
That I cou'd bear your Death, but not a Rival :
Your Death (forgive the Weakness of my Love)
Did not then seem the greatest Evil to me.
But now 'tis present to my View ;— my Soul
Sinks under it ; — and I can bear, my Lord,
Never to hear or see you, so you live.

I know, with what a constant, steddy Mind
You dare confront your Fate : I know your Heart
Wou'd, with a pleasing Pride, give your last Breath
For me : — and dying so, confirm your Love.
Alas, alas ! my Heart is trembling, fearful ;
I must not, cannot, dare not see you die.
Oh ! measure your Misfortunes by my Courage !
Expose me not to Trials too severe ;
Too quick for Sense.

Baja What will become of thee,
When I shall celebrate these fatal Nuptials ?

Ata. Ask not, my Lord, what will become of me :
Whatever is my Fate, I will submit :
And, midst my flowing Tears, enjoy this Comfort,
That you yet live, and live at my Request.

Baj. And think'st thou to effect thy cruel Purpose :
Know thy Commands to make me false, are Crimes
Wou'd sink me down beneath the meanest Slave,
Shou'd I obey 'em — Think *Atalida*,
Our Loves from Infancy to Age have ripen'd
By just Degrees ; fond of the secret Blessing,
We joy'd in Silence o're our mutual Treasure.
How often have I sworn eternal Constancy !
No ; let *Roxana* seek another Bond-Man.
What ! shall I wed her to preserve my Life ?
A Life that has no Comfort but in thee.

Roxana offers me her Love or Death ;
While poor Atalida, too sensible
Of her triumphant Rival's Pow'r, resigns,
(Oh ! glorious Maid, worthy thy Godlike Race !)
Resigns her Heart, her Life, to save her Lover.
No : Let the Sultaness command my Life :
Oh ! can't thou think I will redeem it thus ?
Ata. Yet, you may live, ---- and not be false to me.
Baj. Say, then, Atalida ; propose the Means.
Ata. Roxana loves you ; spite of all her Rage,
She loves you. — Gently soften her Despair.
Suppose your Words and Looks shou'd give her Hopes,
That you one Day —

Baj. I never can consent :
Vertue forbids it ; and it must not be.
'Tis true, I hop'd (but vain are all my Hopes)
One Day, discharg'd of this inglorious Bondage,
To shine in Arms ; by Toils and manly Dangers,
To assert my Lineage, and deserve to reign.
Yet neither Love nor Glory tempt my Soul
To use unworthy Means : No, my Atalida ;
I will no more dissemble with her Love :
I'll to Roxana ; bid her hope no more.
I must prevent thy most unjust Desires,
Which nothing, but thy Fondness can excuse.
Farewel, Atalida ; remember Bajazet

Dies constant to his Honour and his Love.

Ata. No, barb'rous Man, you shall not go alone :
I'll lead the fatal Way : If we must perish,
Roxana's Hand shall join us both in Death.
Yes ; I'll instruct her in the dreadful Secret :
Her Jealousy will drink with eager Thirst
My Blood —— and I deserve to die her Victim.

Baj. Oh ! Heaven ! what would you do ?

Ata. Cruel ! unkind !

Can you believe, I am less sensible
Than you, of what is due to Love and Vertue ?
Oft as my falt'ring Tongue has feign'd this Tale

Of

Of Love from you, to sooth the blinded Queen ;
 So often has the rising Blood o'respread
 My guilty Cheeks : Will you not once attempt
 What I so many Times perform'd for you ?
 Her Heart already, Sir, has seal'd your Pardon :
 One tender Word will soften all her Rage.
 I mark'd her ; when with Love and Anger torn,
 I saw the struggling Passions combat in her ;
 Still Love prevail'd, and over-rul'd her Rage.
 Do not destroy your self ; give her a Hope ;
 But one uncertain Hope, and you disarm her.
 Oh ! save your Life and mine ! --- must I then kneel,
 And beg of Bajazet, my Love, to save me ?

Baj. 'Tis well--- you have prevail'd --- once more,
 my Tongue
 Shall contradict my Heart. --- Oh ! righteous Heav'n
 Where ! where shall I find Words ?

Ata. That Heaven, you mention,
 Angels of Light, the Genii of the Just ;
 Those Guardian Saints, who watchful, guide the
 Of virtuous Lovers ; all will dictate to you. (Hearts
 Away ; I must no more appear between you :
 Your Grief or mine, wou'd certainly betray us.
 Be gone ! --- Remember that my Life is yours.
 It must be done ! --- and tho' my Soul recoils
 At the Deceit ! yet still it must be done.

While Bajazet's hard Sentence I remove,
I wreck my Virtues, to preserve my Love.

The End of the Second ACT.

ACT

A C T III.

S C E N E I.

Atalida, Zara.

Zara. CAN it be, Zara ? Is his Pardon seal'd ?

Zara. A Slave dispatch'd this Moment from

Roxana,

Brought back the joyful Vizier to her Presence :

He pass'd along with eager hasty Steps.

Ata. What did he say ? What is determin'd, Zara ?

Zara. He spoke not, but a Flush of sudden Transport

Sat on his Face, and told the pleasing Change.

Roxana has revers'd her harsh Decree :

And now perhaps the Nuptials are preparing.

Ata. Soft Peace, and tender Love ---- Ye flattering Joys

That fed my credulous Hopes : Farewel for ever :

Hold my too painful Heart ! do'st thou repent

The noble Deed : Have I not done my Duty ?

Zara. What new Alarms ? What Terrors now possess you ?

Ata. What Charms, what new Engagements have oblig'd her

To this so sudden, and unlook'd for Change ?

What ! Will he marry her ?

Zara. I know not Madam ;

But if he buys his Freedom at that Price,

If he performs what your Commands enjoin'd,

If he shou'd wed her —

Atal. Ha ! what say'st thou ? Wed her !

Za. How ! do you then repent the generous Means
Which only can preserve the Prince's Life.

Ata. No, no, I know what 'tis I ought to do ;

These

These jealous Sentiments croud on my Thoughts :
 Yes, he must wed her ; that alone can save
 The Life of *Bajazet* ; 'twas my Desire,
 My last, dear, pious Wish, that he might live :
 One Comfort have I left, one pleasing Thought,
 That I shall die worthy my Royal Master.

Zara. How die ! why shou'd you mention Death
 my Princess ?

Atal. I've lost my Love ! — What have I more to
 loose ?

Is there a Danger or a Fear remaining ?
 Oh ! can't thou think my Death wou'd be an Evil,
 Which thus prevents an endless Train of Woes ?
 He lives ! --- enough ! --- He lives by my Request.
 What then have I to do with Grief or Joy ?
 And yet, alafs ! may I not justly think,
 When I have offer'd up this Sacrifice,
 This Heart : That *Bajazet* will drop a Tear,
 And wish my Faith had found a happier Lot.

Yet hold — I'll hear from *Bajazet* my Doom :
 He shall pronounce it.

Zara. Hide your ill-tim'd Grief ;
 It will betray you both : Behold, *Atalida* !
 The Vizier comes ; let him inform your Doubts.

S C E N E II.

Atalida, Zara, Acomat.

Acom. Once more the Lovers are agreed : A Calm
 Succeeds this Storm, and all our Fears are vanish'd.
 The Sultaness, disarm'd of all her Rage,
 Prepares to shew the wond'ring Populace
 The Standard of our Holy *Mahomet*,
 Which *Bajazet* must bear ; while I stand forth,
 And tell our Mussulmen why this dread Signal
 Is now produc'd ; and fill their Minds with Terrors.

It will prepare this Change. --- The unthinking Crowd
Are govern'd only by their Ears and Eyes. ——

— Yet, Madam, now permit me to renew
The Memory of what my Zeal was promis'd.
Expect not from a Soldier, worn in Arms,
Those soft Endearments with which beardless Boys
Move our green Virgins Hearts ; --- No, Royal Maid,
If this firm Breast has ever been employ'd
In Cares for you, worthy my Age and Honour,
If a long Vassalage ; if constant Services,
Such as all owe to your immortal Name,
May speak. ——

Ata. You shall have Time to count your Merits,
— Well then, you say these Lovers are transported?

Acom. You know what Pleasures fill the ravish'd
Minds

Of two fond Hearts, charm'd with each others Beauty.

Ata. Yes ! — but I was at first surpriz'd to hear
This unexpected Change ; this sudden Turn.

He will espouse her then ?

Acom. So I believe.

I left th' unhappy Couple, as I thought,

Complaining, cross'd, fall'n out with Love and Fortune ;

Strait I retir'd, and in a Brigantine

Resolv'd to save my self and my few Friends ;

When just as we embarq'd, a Slave recall'd me,

And brought me back with Joy to the Seraglio :

There I beheld the blushing Lovesick Queen,

Attending to her youthful Hero's Words,

Her Ears and Eyes were lost in *Bajazet* ;

With Extasy she heard him plead his Pardon.

The silent Court gaz'd awful on the Prince,

While he declar'd his Love : --- Within that Circle

Immovable I waited on her Looks,

When she with Eyes, that show'd her ravish'd Heart,

Gave him her Hand, the Pledge of future Faith,

Which he receiv'd. ——

Ata. Alas! —— My tortur'd Soul!
This was too much. ——

Acom. When now they both perceiv'd me,
Vizier, said she, behold your Prince and mine;
Brave *Acomat*, receive him as your Lord.
Go; Let th' Imperial Honours be prepar'd,
The joyful People wait to attend their Sovereign,
Beneath the sacred Banner to the Temple.

Prostrate I fell before his Godlike Presence,
And kiss'd his Robe; ---- Then, as my Duty prompted
I flew to bring you this transporting News.
My Duty, Madam, will excuse my haste;
I must await our new-created Sultan,
And fix th' Imperial Turbant on his Brow.

SCENE III.

Atalida, Zara.

Ata. Let us be gone; let us retire, my *Zara*,
We will not interrump their Bridal Joys.

Zora. Can you then think? -----

Ata. I know no not what to think;
Dost thou believe I will behold these Nuptials?
The Prince is safe; *Roxana* is appeas'd:
Alas! I little thought that *Bajazet* ---
But why should I complain? 'twas my Desire:
Has he not readily fulfill'd my Will?
Yet am I much surpriz'd, to find the Prince
Cou'd plead with such persuasive Eloquence,
A Cause to which his Soul seem'd so averse:
Then jealous of his Faith, and firm to Honour,
He cou'd not bear to feign one guilty Word.
And yet perhaps his Words were cold and forc'd,
To sooth *Roxana's* Rage, as I requested.
Perhaps tho' they were forc'd, her eager Love
Believ'd the little that he said sincere.
Perhaps his generous Heart, at last was mov'd,

Wha

When he beheld her sacrifice her All ;
Her Faith, her Love, her Power, and Pride to save
Perhaps he thought, by Gratitude subdu'd : (him.
And conscious of the Debt ; --- No, Zara, no,
That Thought has fix'd ten Thousand Daggers here.

Alas ! how fruitful is my jealous Mind,
In Reasons that distract and tear my Bosom.

Zara. Yet he's not crown'd, nor has he yet espous'd
Wait the Success with Patience. (her.

Ata. My dear Zara,

When I prevail'd on him to see *Roxana*,
I did not give up all my Interest in him.
Cou'd I believe after that tender Passion,
Which warm'd our mutual Souls ; this Interview
Wou'd give him Joy and Transport? --- No, my Zara,
My jealous Heart wrongs him and tortures me.

Yet why was I shut out from all his Councils ?
Have I so little Share in *Bajazet* ?

Why does he not attend himself, and plead
His Cause in Person ? --- No, he dares not see me,
He cannot bear his Heart's too just Reproaches,
And therefore 'tis he shuns my hated Presence.

And yet 'tis fit it shou'd be thus -- My Eyes
Wou'd wound him ; they in spight of me wou'd talk
Of Gratitude, of Friendship, Faith, and Love.
He ne'er shall see me more --

Zara. -- Behold the Prince.

S C E N E IV.

Bajazet, Atalida, Zara.

Baj. 'Tis done, I spoke, your Orders are obey'd !
You have no more to fear : My Life is safe ;
And I might be most happy if wrong'd Faith
And injur'd Honour did not check my Joys.
Yes, if this Heart, which now with secret Pangs
Reproaches me, cou'd pardon like *Roxana* :

But I am now no Slave, my Bonds are off,
Thus Master of my Freedom, and my Sword ;
No more my Silence, nor thy trembling Tongue,
Shall combate with a guilty Woman's Passion :
Embattled, arm'd, I'll meet this Tyrant Brother,
There in the tented Field, in noble Dangers,
Let us contend for this Imperial Prize.

Hah ! what do I see ? --- Why dost thou weep,
Dost thou repine at my unjust Success ?

Ata. No, Sir, I murmur not at your Success,
Heav'n, Righteous Heaven, who wrought this Won-
der for you,
Knows with what Prayers and Tears I ask'd your
Life,
And while I breathe, your Eyes must witness for me,
Your Dangers only busied all my Cares.

I sacrifice my Life without Regret.
Indeed if those good Angels who preside
O'er virtuous Love, had listen'd to my Vows,
I might have hop'd for a more happy Death ;
These Eyes wou'd ne'er have seen you wed my Rival.
What, was there then no other Way to melt
Her stubborn Rage, no lower Price than Marriage ?
Yes, you have amply recompenc'd her Love ;
Yet this sweet Thought will comfort me in Death,
That 'twas by my Command ; for Love of me,
You mov'd her Heart —— at least so I believ'd.

Baj. Why dost thou vainly thus disturb thy Peace ?
Why dost thou talk of Love and Marriage Joys ?
Has One injurious Accent wrong'd my Faith ?
Has my Heart feign'd one Falshood to preserve us ?

Roxana's Warmth expounded my Return,
A certain Proof of Love : She cast her Eyes
In Passion on me —— while in Tears of Joy
She vow'd eternal Faith ; her forward Speech
Prevented all my Words, and answer'd for me ?
She gave into my Hands her Life and Fortune,
And founded on my Gratitude the Hope,

The

The certain Hope of future Love and Marriage.
I blush'd to see her credulous Heart deceive her ;
A Flame so tender, so unmerited,
Gave me Confusion ; --- which the blinded Queen
Believ'd to rise from an Excess of Passion.
My Silence was perfidious, I betray'd her ;
And 'tis my Crime, that in that cruel Moment,
I guarded to the last my guilty Tongue,
To save my Love.

Ata. Forgive my doubting Mind,
If she believ'd you hers, might I not tremble ?
Millions of Fears fill each important Moment,
And croud my buisy Brain when thou art absent,
Ev'n now my Love I fear !

Baj. 'Tis most unjust,
Thus when my Heart, pierc'd with its own Upbraid-
Retires to thy lov'd Bosom for Relief, (ings,
To beat it back again : —— Unkind *Atalida* !

Dost thou afflict me with a broken Heart ?
And Death, and injur'd Faith ? --- I see thy Fears,
Thy jealous Fears prevail o'er all my Vows,
And paint me to thy Fancy false and perjur'd :

It is not to be born ! here let us fix,
Let us remove these Colours ; they delude
And torture us, while we deceive *Roxana*.
Let us appear before the haughty Queen,
Such as we are ; such as our Fate has made us :
One Heart, one Soul ; let us stand up in Virtue,
And brave our guilty Fortune ; — I'll declare
What I have said was all pretended, feign'd,
To hide our mutual Passion. --- But she comes,
Roxana comes : Now thou shalt see, my Love,
With what a steady Mind I'll meet my Fate.

Ata. Good Heav'n ! what must I do ? Oh *Bajazer*,
If thou didst ever love me ; if my Life,
My Peace, my Honour, e'er were dear to thee.
I beg thee do not undeceive her now.
She's here ; remember Prince. ----

SCENE V.

Bajazet, Roxana, Atalida.

Roxa. The Time is come,
 The happy Moment is at last arriv'd,
 Now rang'd beneath our holy Prophet's Banner,
 The whole Seraglio calls you to the Throne ;
 The numerous Slaves who fill this awful Palace,
 Assembled by my Orders, wait my Will :
 Accept these Subjects which my Love presents,
 The first in dutious Homage to my Lord.
 Ah, cou'dst thou think, my Friend, that so much
 Love,

[To Atalida.]

Cou'd ever have succeeded so much Rage ?
 Did I not vow this Day shou'd be his last,
 That I wou'd never hear, or see him more ?
 The Vow that Love occasion'd, Love has broke ;
 I saw his Mind disorder'd and confus'd,
 I pardon'd all, the Nuptials are preparing,
 I know him Noble, and believe his Word.

Baj. Yes, I have promis'd, I have given my Faith
 Never to live unmindful of the Debt,
 The mighty Debt my Gratitude must pay ;
 I've sworn in ever-living Truth and Duty,
 To thank you with my Services, and Life ;
 And if this Price can pay or purchase ought,
 I'm free ; if not, I must remain your Slave.

SCENE VI.

Roxana, Atalida.

Rox. Amazement ! Heav'n ! what is it strikes my Soul
 Illuding Vision ! Do these Eyes deceive me ?
 Were not his Looks o'ercast with Discontent,
 His Words all frozen, and his Accent cold ?

Alas !

Alas ! I thought his Love sincere and fix'd,
What ! does he then repent my Rage appeas'd ?
How long ! how long ! will thy rash Love delude thee ?
Hah ! You were talking with him ; tell me, Madam,
How were his Thoughts employ'd ?

Ata. On Love and You.

Roxa. On me ! --- You see he throws away his Life,
Rather than counterfeit a Moment's Passion.
But say wherefore when Joy shou'd be the Subject,
Why when all Eyes and Hearts were fill'd with Trans-
Did he retire to wail with you his Fortune ? (port ?
Perhaps you can explain the mournful Cause,
That thus (Oh Righteous *Alha*) blasts my Hopes.

Ata. I did not mark this melancholy Air,
It has not cross'd my unobserving Eyes.
He weary'd me with talking o'er your Bounties ;
Now while you enter'd, ev'n now his Heart,
His grateful Heart, was full of Love and You.
Shou'd he seem otherwise, no wonder, Madam,
This solemn Hour, big with his future Weal,
This sacred Crisis of his Fate and Fortune,
May ask for Solitude and serious Thinking ;
A passing Care may overcast his Mind,
And for a Moment cloud his cheerful Brow.

Roxa. Madam, you plead his Cause with great Ad-

Ata. What other Reasons can --- (dres !

Roxa. Enough ! enough ! —

I know your Reasons better than you think ;
Leave me : ---- I too have need of Solitude ;
I have my Cares and Fears, like *Bajazet*.
Oh leave me for a Moment to my Thoughts.

S C E N E VII.

Roxana *Alone.*

Which way shall I interpret what I see ?

I am deceiv'd, betray'd ; they both have held
guilty, loving, curs'd Intelligence :

Why

Why did the Blood forsake her guilty Cheeks ?
 Why shou'd she start and tremble ? Why should he
 Behold me with Astonishment and Horror ?
 To what unworthy Shame am I condemn'd !
 Is this then the Reward of all my Love ?
 Have all my waking Cares and sleepless Nights,
 My Plots, my dark Intrigues, my Breach of Faith,
 My violated Vows and hated Treasons,
 Serv'd only to promote a Rival's Interest ?
 Yet I may wrong my self, and him, and her,
 And this may be th' Illusion of my Fears ;
 Wou'd she solicit with such a Zeal a Marriage,
 Which must for ever root up all her Hopes ?
 Or cou'd his generous Heart repay me thus ?
 It cannot be ; I fright my self with Shadows :
 And yet, alas ! dost thou not know too well
 Love's Empire ; what is Gratitude or Duty ?
 Those Ties shou'd bind thy Heart to *Amurat*,
 If I consult my Reason then ---- Who's there ?

S C E N E VIII.

Roxana, Zatima.

Zat. Your Pardon, Madam, that I thus presume
 Uncall'd to break into your private Moments ;
 A Slave is from the Army just arriv'd.
 The Port that opens on the Sea was clos'd ;
 But when the Mutes, who guarded it, beheld
 Their Sultan's Orders, they obey'd and trembled :
 And to my great Surprize, this Slave was *Orcan*.

Roxa. Orcan !

Zat. Yes he, our Sultan's faithful Creature,
 That executes without Remorse his Will.

Africk, his Native Country, never bred
 A Soul and Body more of one Complexion,
 His sullen Mind gleams thro' his darken'd Vifage :
 I have detain'd him in the next Apartment,
 Till I receiv'd your Pleasure.

Rox

Rox. Zatima,

What can his Orders bear ? What can I answer ?
Tis certain the disturb'd and jealous Sultan,
A second Time demands his Brother's Head,
But still that Blow must be by my Command ;
For all within this Palace yet are mine.
But ought I, shou'd I now defend his Life ?
Is Amurat, or Bajazet, my Lord ?
The one I have betray'd, the other me ;
Time presses, Doubts perplex me, teach, advise :
What's to be done ? With artful Guile these Lovers
Conceal their Hearts, but Love cannot be hid.

If the dumb Voice her tuneful Aid denies,
It eloquently lightens in our Eyes ;
If both are silent, the strong Passion breaks
Its rapid Way ; each Sigh and Motion speaks ;
Ev'n now Love's Power does my whole Soul employ,
And my torn Heart will know no other Joy.

The End of the Third ACT.



ACT IV. SCENE I.

Atalida, Zara.

Ata. **K** Now'ſt thou my Fears ? Know'ſt thou with
in this Palace

I've ſeen the dreadful Viſage of black *Orcan* ?
What Dangers wait on ev'ry Moment's Breath ?
What Fears incloſe me round ? — But ſay, my *Zara*,
Will *Bajazet* submit to ſee *Roxana* ?

And once more try to mitigate her Fury,
Zara. She will no more be ſeen ; ſuch are her
Orders :

She fears this Slave, and wou'd conceal from him
Her trait'rous Paſſion. While her Thoughts were b
fy'd

On *Orcan*, I perform'd your laſt Commands ;
I ſaw the Prince, and gave into his Hands
Your Letter, Madam : This contains his Anſwer.

[Gives her a Lett

Atalida reads.

" Why ſhou'd you urge me on to new Deceits ?
" Why thus inure my upright Soul to Falſhoods ?
" But ſince you ſay your Life depends on mine,
" Be ſatisfy'd, that I desire to live.
" I'll ſee *Roxana* : By ſubmiſſive Looks,
" Perswasive Words, and Vows of Gratiſude,
" I will endeavour to appeafe her Rage.
" Let this ſuffice : But, Madam, neither Life
" Nor Death, nor you your ſelf, can e'er prevail,
" To make my perjur'd Lips pronounce, I love her
" Since while I live, my Love is fix'd on you.

Alass ! what says he : Can he then believe
I know not that he loves, that he adores me?
No, *Bajazet*, 'tis not *Atalida*,
It is *Roxana* thou should'st thus perswade:
Hence Jealousy, thou fatal lying Fiend,
Thou false Seducer of our Hearts, begone ;
I love, and am belov'd : Oh ! perfect Joy !
Roxana too, shall be appeas'd once more.
Hence, *Zara* ! let him know his Eyes, his Mouth,
(I dare not say his Heart) must still perswade,
Must still deceive.

Zara. Madam, the Queen is here.

Ata. Hold ! let me hide this Letter, 'twill betray
us. [Hides the Letter in her Bosom.]

SCENE II.

Atalida, Zara, Roxana, Zatima, and Women attending.

Roxana with a Paper.

[*Roxana aside to Zatima.*] These Orders, *Zatima*,
will probe her Heart,
And find the Prince, tho' she conceals him there.

Atalida to Zara.] Run, Fly, Desire, Perswade, In-
treat, Command ;

Tell him I die, unless he please *Roxana*.

[*Roxana advancing to Atalida.*] I have receiv'd
these Letters from our Army ;

Madam, are you inform'd of what has pass'd ?

Ata. I've heard a Slave is from the Camp arriv'd,
But what Commands he bears, as yet I know not.

Roxa. The Sultan is triumphant : He returns
Victorious, haughty *Babylon* is conquer'd :

Ata. How ! Madam, *Osmyn* ---

Roxa. *Osmyn* was ill inform'd. ---

Ata. Oh ! Partial Fate !

Roxa. To fill the Measure up,
Of our Misfortunes, *Amurat* is coming.

Ata. Will not the Persian Arms retard his March?

Roxa. No, nothing stops the Victor's fatal Progress,
Before to Morrow Sun extends the Shades,
He'll thunder at our Gates : All, all is lost.

Ata. Then wherefore do we talk? 'Tis Time to act,
Be swift, exert your Power, and save us all.

Roxa. 'Tis Time to think, when we oppose a Conqueror.

Ata. O Heaven!

Roxa. Time has not soften'd yet his Heart ;
Behold what he commands ; this is his Will.

Ata. What does he then command ?

Roxa. Behold it, read it,
You know his Hand and Signet ; read it, Madam.

Ata. It is the Writing of fierce *Amurat*.

Atalida reads.

" Before this haughty City prov'd my Power,
" I sent an absolute Command, that *Bajazet*
" Shou'd die ; I hope those Orders are obey'd.
" *Orcan* confirms my Will : If you regard
" Your Life, when next you shall appear before me
" Produce that Traitor's Head, and save your own.

Roxa. You hear his Will :

Ata. Hold, hold my swelling Heart.

Roxa. What are your Thoughts of this?

Ata. Can he pursue

His parricidal, cruel, bloody Purpose ?
Will he proscribe a Prince without a Crime
Presum'd; unconscious of all Guilt but Love ?
'Tho' yet he knows not that you Love, adore him
That *Bajazet* and you make but one Soul ;
That if he dies, you perish. ---

Roxa. —— Madam, I ! ——

I wou'd preserve the Prince : I cannot hate him,
But —

Ata. —— But what have you resolv'd ?

Roxa. To obey.

Ata. To obey!

Roxa. — You see what Dangers urge me on,

He must —

Ata. How! must he die that loves you thus :
The Prince you love ! What ! must he die by you ?
Your Hours and his were destin'd to one Course ;
The joyous Moments had begun their Race ;
Let 'em not perish by your Hand, Roxana.

Roxa. 'Tis done ! — the fatal Orders are obey'd :

Ata. Fainting.] Oh ! Bajazet !

Zat. She faints ! assist me, Zara.

Roxa. Assist, and lead her hence to my Apartment :
As she recovers, watch each Look and Motion,
Give me more Proof of her perfidious Passion.

SCENE III.

Roxana alone.

At length my Rival has reveal'd her Guilt ;
Upon her Faith, I founded all my Hopes ;
All my fond Hopes, of Love and Bajazet.
Six tedious Months, each Anxious Night and Day,
I thought Atalida, my Friend, I thought
She was the faithful Guardian of my Love :
And lo ! six tedious Months, each Night and Day,
her most faithful Slave have watch'd for her,
Guarded her softest, dearest, odious Moments.
False Woman ! Doating Fool ! Oh ! 'tis too plain,
My Misery is painted on her Visage ;
Tho' whelm'd in Grief, yet still a glimmering Hope
Points thro', and tells her Bajazet is hers ;
His Life, his Life alone is all her Care,
But let him live or die, still I am lost.
What ! shall I wait 'till she explains her Perfidy
With her own Mouth ? 'Tis Time to act, Roxana,
The Sultan comes apace, fierce Orcan threatens ;
Let 'em both die, I'll wait no farther Proof.

---No,

— No, I have better thought ; he shall again Behold her ; I'll appoint once more their Meeting, Surprize 'em in their soft, unguarded Moments, When mutually they sigh : When their fond Souls Brood o'er their pleasing Sorrows, then this Hand Shall join 'em both, with the same pointed Dagger Unite 'em ever ; drive into my Heart, Into this Heart, the reeking bloody Steel, And stab the perjur'd Traitor's Image here.

SCENE IV.

Roxana, Zatima.

Roxa. Hah ! *Zatima*, what bring'st thou ? Does she love him ? What says her Heart ? Her Tongue ? How does she look ?

How talk ? Oh ! tell me, and relieve my Pangs.

Zat. She speaks no more, all Signs of Life are vanish'd Excepting now and then a heavy Sigh, As if her Heart wou'd burst her swelling Bosom : Your Women, to whose Care she was deliver'd, Open'd her Breast to give her Passion Way, I join'd my pious Aid, and found inclos'd, Ev'n next her Heart, this Paper ; 'tis the Writing Of *Bajazet*. —

[*Roxana snatching eagerly the Letter.*] Hah ! give me, *Zatima*.

What means this ? Wherefore shakes my Hand ? My Heart

Is cold as Ice — Why shou'd this Writing move me ? What ! he might write without Offence to me, He might. — But let us read and see his Thoughts

[*Reads to her self 'till she comes to the following Lines, which she reads aloud.*]

“ Neither Life

“ Nor Death, nor you your self, can e'er prevail

" To make my perjur'd Lips pronounce, I love her,
" Since while I live, my Love is fix'd on you.

So then, the Treason is reveal'd in full ?
'Tis plain ; and I can be deceiv'd no more.
Wretch ! Wretch ! unworthy of the Light and me.
I live again, I Reign; yes, my Heart bounds,
Exults with Joy ; the Treason is discover'd.
No more tormenting Doubts shall rack this Bosom,
My Fury now has Scope ; let it then rage.
He dies, Revenge ! Fly, let the Mutes be ready ;
Bid 'em prepare the fatal String, he dies.
Oh Zatima ! fond Love has now no Room
Within this Breast ; here Vengeance governs all.

Zat. —— Madam, ——

Roxa. —— Say'st thou ?

Zat. —— If it might not displease,
If in this Transport of your Rage, you deign
To hear a trembling Voice that loves and serves you ;
'Tis true, the Prince's Crime is worthy Death,
Yet sure you must believe that *Amurat*
Is at this Time more to be fear'd than he ?
Shou'd some unfaithful Tongue, as such there are,
Disclose this fatal Story to the Sultan ;
Alas ! you know too well, that Hearts like his,
Can never be regain'd, when once offended :
His sudden Death, and at this very Moment,
Wou'd prove your Passion, not your Duty mov'd you.

Roxa. With what tyrannick, cruel Pride they both
Insulted o'er my weak believing Mind ?
Perfidious Wretches ! ye shall pay the Price ;
This Triumph shall be purchas'd with your Blood.
The Mistress of the World, set high, and crown'd
With all the Gifts that Fortune cou'd bestow ;
Say, *Bajazet*, did I not stoop to raise thee ?
Where Misery's cold Hand had laid thee low,
To comfort thy Distress, to save thy Soul
From Death, and fill thy Days with Peace ; --- Alas !
What

What have these Blessings that my Love has lavish'd,
Produc'd? -- My lab'ring Heart is sick with Anguish--
Thou weep'st, unhappy Wretch! thy Tears are just;
Thou thought'st his Love thy Debt, and vainly hop'd
Such Benefits wou'd move the coldest Gratitude. ---
Still dost thou weep? — Forget him, drive him from
thee;

[Pointing to the Letter.] He guards his Life only to
please my Rival;

Ah Traitor! Traitor! —

Zat. Still the Moments waste,
The Sultan hastens forward, think in Time.

Roxa. Is he not dead? Art thou not gone? Stay
Zatima,

The Work shall be my own; --- I'll act my Vengeance
With this Right Hand, I'll see th' ungrateful Tyrant
You, Zatima, retain my Rival here,
Her Shrieks shall waken his expiring Spirit,
And point the Sting of Death --- Guard, guard her well
I'll be her faithful Servant still. — My Hate
Defends her Life. — Yes, if to fear his Loss
Was almost fatal, — what must be her Torture,
When she beholds him pale and dead before her?
When those fair Lights, that twin'd their wanton

Beams

With hers, and fill'd her Love with curs'd Delight,
Are fix'd — when those dear Lips, that Godlike Form
Are spoil'd of Breath; a mangled lifeless Corps;
Will she not then feel these tormenting Pangs
That stab my Heart, Rage and Despair like me?
She will, that Object shall avenge her Treason,
And satisfy my Wrongs. — Secure th' Apartment,
With a dead Silence wait the fated Moment,
Let none, none enter here till I return;
I'll — Who is this that dares defer my Vengeance?

SCENE

S C E N E V.

Roxana, Zatima, Acomat, Osmyn.

Ewaste

Acom. What stops you, Madam ? wherefore do we
the precious Sands of this important Hour ?
the buzzing Multitude are all assembled,
Impatient, full of fancy'd Hope, and Fear.
They from your Hands alone expect their Signal :
Why does this Palace at this sacred Moment,
Keep an inactive, a destructive Silence ?
Declare, declare ; let us not vainly wait.

Roxa. Vizier, be satisfy'd — I will declare.

Acom. And yet your Looks in deepest Sorrow sunk,
Speak other Thoughts ; Say, Madam, what has
happen'd ?

Roxa. Know Vizier then, your *Bajazet* is false.

Acom. He false !

Roxa. Perfidious, base, ungrateful,
He has betray'd us both. — —

Acom. How ! — —

Roxa. This, Atalida — —

Ch worthy Prize ! for her we both have labour'd,
Plotted, intrigued, betray'd.

Acom. Hah !

Roxa. Read that Paper, — —

Were ever Wrongs like ours ? Have we not both
Embrac'd a pois'nous Aspic in our Bosoms ?

Let us not still defend this Traitor's Life ;

No, let us rather patiently submit

To what the Conqueror's Justice shall impose ;

Let us appease him with this Sacrifice.

Acom. This Outrage was to me ; How durst he thus
Weaken those Hands were lifted to protect him :

Base and perfidious ! Throw your Cares on me,

Roxana, trust your Vengeance to my Conduct.

Roxa. No, Acomat, I'll not be rob'd of that,
Viduous Fortune shan't defraud me too

Of my Revenge! No, let me think a little:—
 I will prepare Horrors beyond account,
 To wait in order each successive Moment;
 Dismiss your Friends, and leave to me alone
 The Guidance of what yet remains undone.

SCENE VI.

[Acomat to Osmyn going.] Hold Osmyn! yet we must not leave this Place. [port you

Osm. How! whither does your injur'd Love that Your Vengeance will be satisfy'd; 'tis weak, Unmanly to behold your Mistress die. [Osm.

Acom. What dost thou say? Can't thou believe, de That this ridiculous Passion stirs my Blood; Wou'd to just Heav'n Roxana's injur'd Honour Cou'd pardon Bajazet, as I Atalida.

Osm. Why, Vizier, wou'd you still defend the Prince?

Acom. Without him 'tis not in her Power to save us Dost thou not see us leagu'd, and bound in one? 'Tis fated, we must live or die together. Oh curs'd Event of Councils well advis'd! Blind Prince! or rather thou blind Minister! Yes, it became thee well, thy Years and Honours, To trust the Movement of this mighty Wheel, To a frail Woman, and a Love-sick Boy.

Osm. Why, let 'em perish in their idle Quarrels; It is determin'd Bajazet must die; Then save your self: He only can reveal Our fatal Councils: Let your vlianat Friends Be constant, and you'll find the Sultan's Wrath Will with his Death be soften'd and appeas'd.

Acom. The Love-blind Sultaness might reason thus I am grown white in Arms, beneath three Sultans I know this Throne holds never erring Maxims: I've seen my Fellow-Servants bleed for Virtue; I've seen 'em fall Examples of great Merit, And jealous Power; 'twou'd be the heighth of Foll

To hope for Life — Nothing remains but Death,
Between an angry Master, and his Slave.

Osm. Then fly!

Acom. Hah! I will fly, dear *Osmyn* ;
But first, I'll put in act an Enterprize
Shall mark the Time, that our Sons Sons may say
'Twas done like Men and Soldiers. — *Amurat*,
We'll, like an Earthquake, shake your Seat of Empire ;
Yes, *Bajazet* shall live ; — Why do we gaze
And stand astonish'd? Let us urge our Fate,
Provoke our Fortune: *Bajazet* shall live,
For us, and for his Friends, and for *Roxana* ;
Spite of himself, we'll save him from this Ruin.

Thou saw'st how readily her trembling Heart
Reclaim'd him, when I offer'd to revenge her ;
Of Love I little know, yet I dare answer,
She cou'd forgive the Man that shou'd preserve him.

Osm. What can inspire this nobly rash Resolve?
Roxana's Word will drive us hence for ever.
This Palace swarms. —

Acom. With Slaves and beardless Eunuchs,
Bred in enervate Luxury and Sloth,
Nurs'd in the sleepy Shade of this *Seraglio*.
My Brother, Fellow-Soldier, Friend, hard Fortune
Has joyn'd us both by the same rigorous Bonds ;
Wou't thou yet second me, and draw thy Sword
Once more, beneath my inauspicious Conduct.

Osm. You wrong me, Vizier; --- if you die, --- I perish.
Acom. A brave and chosen Body of my Friends,
Attend us, *Osmyn*, at the Palace Gates ;
I know the secret Windings of this Labyrinth,
And can conduct them, where despairing *Bajazet*
May find a better Lot. Away then march ;
If we must die, still we shall fall like Soldiers,
Like Men that durst look up, and meet their Fate.

The Hero's Soul defies the Tyrant's Sword,
He is himself his own imperial Lord;
No Tortures can dismay, no Chains can bind,
No Fears alarm, no Dangers shake his Mind.

The End of the Fourth ACT.

ACT V.

SCENE I.

Atalida.

Alafs ! I search in vain ! — Oh ! *Bajazet*,
Where art thou ? Gone ! — For ever gone from
me !

Why am I left within these Walls alone ?
My beating Heart boads Mischief.— All is lost !

[*Searching for the Letter.*]

Ah ! what avail'd it thee to hide with Care,
And close his fatal Letter in thy Bosom.
Roxana's Presence scatter'd all thy Spirits :
Her Voice, her Menaces, her bloody Orders
Enfeebl'd my weak Frame, and struck me dead.

The Women, her too faithful Ministers,
Are vanish'd all ! — What will become of me ?
Ye cruel, barb'rous Hands ! Is this your Succour ?
I dearly purchase your inhuman Aid !

A deep and awful Silence guards this Place,
And Horrors dwell around ! — Alafs ! *Atalida*,
What hast thou now to fear ? What more to loose
My *Bajazet* is dead ! — or dies this Moment !
And thou thy Rival's Pris'ner ! Hark ! the Doors
Fly open ! — Now ; now I shall learn his Fate.

SCENE II.

*Roxana, Atalida, Zatima.**Roxa.* Retire !*Ata.* Madam, if you cou'd pardon —*Roxa.* Herce !

Retire

Retire ! Be gone ! Reply not ! 'Tis my Will !
Guards, take your Pris'ner.

S C E N E III.

Roxana, Zatima.

Roxa. All Things are prepar'd,
Fierce Orcan, and the Mutes expect their Victim.
Yet am I still the Mistress of his Fate ;
And can defer it : — But, shou'd he attempt
One Step beyond his Bounds, he dies.—Say, *Zatima*,
How did he take my Message ? Will he come ?

Zat. Suspecting not his Destiny so near,
He seem'd with Pleasure to obey the Summons,
And now a Slave conducts him to your Presence.

Roxa. — Abject, --- and poor of Spirit ! justly
scorn'd !

And only fit to be deceiv'd ! — Can'st thou
Submit to let him come ; and bear again
To see him triumph over all thy Weakness ?
Think'st thou to frighten, or perswade his Soul ?
Or shou'd he yield, can'st thou consent to pardon ?
No, no ! — Too long he has abus'd my Fondness !
I will no more attempt his harden'd Heart :
No ! — Let him perish quick ! — But see ; he comes.

S C E N E IV.

Roxana, Bajazet.

Roxa. I shall not tire you, Prince, with vain Re-
proaches ;
The Moments are too precious to be lost.
You know what I have done.— To say no mo~~re
You live :— And I repine not, that my Love,
My Benefits, cou'd merit no Regard.~~

Tho'

Tho', to a noble Mind, such lavish Kindness
And such uncommon Love might have their Weight,
And partly recompence the want of Charms.

But, it surprises me, you e'er cou'd think
Falshood and Treachery were fit Returns
For so much Faith and Love ; that you cou'd stood
To feign a Passion which your Heart ne'er felt.

Baj. How, Madam ! I ! —

Roxa. Yes, You ! No more ; no more :
Strive not with Words to varnish o're thy Guilt ;
Nor let thy perjur'd Lips prophane that Passion,
Which thou do'st only feel for thy *Atalida*.

Baj. *Atalida* ! —— What idle busy Tongue —

Roxa. Read : --- And deny that Writing if you can

Baj. I have no more to say. —— These Lines

Roxana,
Reveal the Secret of a hapless Passion.
How often have you seen my labouring Breast
Ready to burst with Sighs : I durst not vent b
I love her ; I confess it : And my Heart,
Engag'd even in my Childhood, cou'd admit
No foreign Guest.

Roxa. Tortures ! Distraction ! Death !
Well, Sir ; go on, go on : but still remember,
The Time is short : This Moment is your last.

Baj. You offer'd me at once, both Life and Em
pire :

Cou'd I reject such Offers ? —— You believ'd
(What most you wish'd) That I must love the Giv
I saw your Error, and forbore to check it.
What cou'd I more ? --- When you disclos'd your
Passion,

And once had deign'd to parley with your Slave :
Your Safety then requir'd I shou'd comply.
How ill this Fraud became me, you can witness.
How oft have you reproach'd my guilty Silence ?
The more I saw my promis'd Hopes advance,
The more I pity'd you, and blam'd my self.

Yet Heav'n, that searches all my Thoughts, does know,

I should not have repaid with empty Vows

This mighty Debt. — No, Madam, if Success

Had open'd to my Gratitude the Means,

I amply shou'd have recompenc'd your Bounty,

I shou'd have crown'd your most aspiring Wishes :

That you your self might say ----

Roxa. What coulst thou do ?

What canst thou give, vain Man, besides thy Heart ?

Thinkst thou thy idle Vows can profit me ?

Dost thou not then remember who I am ?

The Sultaness, great Amurat's Vicegerent !

Who rule, beneath his Influence, half the Globe !

(And what I ne'er must hope to find in thee)

The Sovereign of his Heart ! --- Thus rais'd in Power,

Dost thou believe I will abase my self

To herd with Slaves ? scorn'd of the Man I crown'd

And live upon my hated Rival's Smiles ! (more

But I have done — the Moments waste. Once

Resolve my Doubts. — Behold the Sultan's Orders,

The Mutes attend. --- Wilt thou yet live and reign ?

Determine : --- Speak : --- Reply.

Baja. Obey the Sultan,

Roxa. No, Bajazet ! --- I will defeat thy Pride !

Thy haughty Soul aspires to perish for her !

For curst Atalida. — But she shall die.

The Mutes shall strain the fatal Cords before thee :

Thou shalt behold each captivating Feature,

Deform'd and swoln with suffocating Blood.

When she is gone, I may posses thy Love.

On these Conditions you obtain your Pardon.

Follow me, and live.

Baj. Cruel, bloody Woman !

I'll not accept it but to punish thee :

To shew the World how I abhor thy Pride :

To make a great Example of thy Crimes,

And leave thy Name a Curse to future Ages.

Wretch

Wretch that I am ! abandon'd to Distraction !
 Oh, let me not provoke you by my Frenzy
 To ruin her ! Alas, she is innocent
 Of all my Rage, my Falshood, my Injustice !
 Far from preventing your intended Nuptials :
 She has conjur'd me to renounce her Love,
 And give my self to you. — Be just, *Roxana*,
 And separate her Vertues from my Crimes.
 Let your whole store of Vengeance fall on me :
 Haste ; execute my Brother's bloody Orders,
 And let me die, at least, before I hate you.
 The cruel Sultan does not ask her Life.
 Oh, spare her then ! Grant this my last Request ;
 Add this one Boon to all your former Kindness,
 If ever, Madam, I was dear —

Roxa. No more !

A Guard there ! Take your Pris'ner ! — Never more
 Perfidious Man, shalt thou behold my Face !

SCENE V.

Roxana, Zatima.

Zat. Atalida requests once more to see you ;
 She begs she may be heard but one short Moment :
 She urges Bus'ness, Madam, that concerns
 Your sacred Life and Safety. —

Roxa. Let her come !

Haste, *Zatima*, and follow *Bajazet* ;
 Be thou the Witness of my just Revenge,
 And bring me early Notice of his Death.

SCENE VI.

Roxana, Atalida.

Ata. Madam, I come not now to coounterfeit,
 To act the Friend, and to abuse your Goodness :

Abash'd,

Abash'd, confounded, worthy of your Hate,
I come to speak the Secret of my Heart,
To own my Crime, and yield to your Resentments.
Yes, Madam, I confess I have deceiv'd you.
Urg'd by my Love, when e're I saw the Prince,
Far from obeying you, in all I said,
In all I did, I study'd to betray you ;
I lov'd him young, and won his Heart betimes,
E're yet we knew, alafs, what 'twas to love !
The Sultaness, his Mother, joyn'd us both,
And, dying, ratify'd the fatal Union.

Roxa. Do'st thou then hope to move me by this Tale ?
Deceitful Woman !

Ata. Yet vouchsafe to hear me ;
You lov'd him since, — and happy had it been
Both for your Peace and mine, had you but knownit
My Heart, or I been ignorant of yours.
I cannot, Madam, disavow my Guilt ;
I swear by Heaven, that sees my just Confusion ;
By all the immortal Race of *Ottoman*,
My God-like Ancestors, who now in me
Lye prostrate at your Feet ; by them I swear
That *Bajazet* stands clear of all my Falshood.
His Eyes at last were open to your Charms ;
His Heart was sensible to all your Bounties :
My Jealousy was busy to pervert
His generous Purpose, and to injure you.
I practis'd every Art to sap his Virtue ;
By turns I try'd Reproaches, Tears and Rage ;
Accus'd him with my Death ; gave him no Rest,
Till I this Day, this most ill-fated Day,
Wrested fresh Pledges from him of his Love ;
Made him retract his Faith, his Vows to you,
And drove him headlong to our mutual Ruin.

Roxa. How ! then — I thought — No, no ! it
cannot be ;
See your Drift, your little Arts are vain ;
No longer I believe ; no longer you deceive.

Ata. You may believe me, I resign the Prince ;
 Impute his past Indifference all to me,
 And think he will at last repay your Ardor.
 When I am gone, the cause of his Unkindness,
 No jealous Fears will interrupt your Loves.

Yet, Madam, though my Crime does merit Death
 Let not my Sentence be pronounc'd by you.
 Remember he once lov'd me, and who knows,
 Shou'd you approach him crimson'd with my Blood,
 But it may wound his yet too tender Heart ;
 Give him Distaste, and fill his Soul with Horror.
 You may intrust your Vengeance to my Hands ;
 For I am grown impatient after Death,
 And shall be speedy to perform your Will.

Go, Madam, go, and reign with *Bajazet*,
 Crown the young Hero, and confirm him yours ;
 Secure his Life, I'll answer for my Death.
 Go, Madam : I shall Rival you no more,
 So shall your Happiness be undisturb'd,
 And I, at least, be past all Sense of Sorrow.

Roxa. I merit not this mighty Sacrifice :
 I shall be just to you and to my self.
 Far from dividing you from *Bajazet*,
 I mean this Day to join you both for ever.
 Rise, Madam, you shall see once more your Prince.
 But ---- hah ---- What means *Shouting and a confus*
 this unexpected Tumult ? *Noise without.*

SCENE VII.

Roxana, Atalida, Zatima.

Zat. Haste, Madam, shew your self, and stem the
 Torrent ;
 It bears upon us. —— All is in Disorder ;
 The Rebel *Acomat* commands the Palace,
 He and his impious Friends have forc'd their Passage
 With rude Assaults, profaning the Seraglio ;

T

The bravest of your Slaves, who scorn to fly,
Inactive stand, as doubtful of their Duty,
And think the Vizier authoriz'd by you.

Roxa. Audacious Traitor ! Zatima, do thou
(As thou shalt answer for her with thy Life)
Secure my Captive ; while I fly to quell
this daring Treason, and assert my Power.

S C E N E VIII.

Atalida, Zatima.

Ata. Alas ! I know not what to hope or fear ;
Nor whom to favour in my secret Wishes !

If e'er thy Mind was touch'd with soft Compassion,
Assist a Wretch that pants and gasps for Comfort.
I do not ask thee to betray thy Mistress ---
Oh Zatima ! When didst thou see the Prince ?

May I yet hope he lives ?

Zat. Unhappy Princess !

I dare no more but pity your Misfortunes.

Ata. Has then *Roxana* sentenc'd him to die ?

Zat. I must be secret, and approve my Faith.

Ata. Insulting Zatima ! perverse of Mind !

Say only whether *Bajazet* yet lives.

Zat. Shou'd I reply, my Life must pay the Forfeit.

Ata. Oh, 'tis too much ! ---- strike here, and give
full Proof

Of thy curs'd Zeal to serve a Tyrant's Will,
Transfix this Heart, more wounded by thy Silence ;
Slave to a Slave ! and both alike inhuman !
Haste, spill the Blood for which *Roxana* thirsts,
And shew thy self accomplish'd for her Service.

In vain thou stand'ft my Guard, I'll force my Way :
Stand off ! —— I'll see my *Bijazet*, or perish.

SCENE IX.

Atalida, Acomat, Zatima.

Acom. Where ! where is *Bajazet* ? Instruct me
Madam !

Shall I yet live to save him ?

Ata. Oh my Fears !

Acom. Already have I travers'd the Seraglio.
Courageous *Osmyn* leads on half my Friends ;
The rest have seconded my bold Attempts.
Still as I pass, I meet a Herd of Dastards,
No Foes, but flying Slaves and fearful Women.

Ata. Alas ; I cannot learn his Destiny ;
This Slave alone can tell —

Acom. Speak Traitors, speak :
Tempt not my Vengeance ! lead me to the Prince :

SCENE X.

Atalida, Acomat, Zatima, Zara.

Zara. Madam —

Ata. What bring'st thou, *Zara* ?

Zara. Cease to fear,

Your Rival, your once dreaded Foe is dead.

Ata. The Sultaness !

Zara. And what will more surprize you,
She fell by *Orcan* : — *Orcan* gave the Blow.

Ata. How ! *Orcan* !

Zara. Failing in his curs'd Design
On *Bajazet*, his Fury fell on her.

Ata. Oh Righteous Heav'n ! then Virtue is thy
Care,

He lives ! he lives ! Run Vizier and assist him ;
Fly, bring him back to Life, to Love and Empire.

Zara.

Zara. Behold where Osmyn comes! He saw the
Deed,
And may in every Circumstance inform you.

S C E N E XI.

Atalida, Acomat, Zara, Osmyn.

Acomat. Say, is Roxana dead?
Osm. I saw the Assassin
Draw the warm reeking Poniard from her Breast;
Orcan, to whom the Secret was intrusted,
Made shew of Friendship to insure her Ruin.
It seems the Sultan had dispatch'd him hither
To sacrifice the Lovers, one by one —
As we advanc'd our Arms, he cry'd aloud,
" Ye Mussulmen, behold your Sultan's Orders,
" Fall prostrate, and adore the sacred Signet;
" Hence ye profane, and quit this holy Palace.
Thus having spoke, he left the Sultaness
Weltring in Blood upon the Marble Pavement;
Then, marching forwards, with his goary Hands
Full in our Sight, display'd the fatal Mandate
That authoriz'd his Murders. Stung with Rage,
We rush'd upon him, and with lifted Sabres
Aveng'd on him the Death of --- Bajazet.

Ata. Of Bajazet!
Acom. What say'st thou?
Osm. He is dead,
Knew you not this?
Atal. Oh Heaven! —
Osm. The Sultaness!
Lost in her Fears, distrustful of your Succours,
Abandon'd to her Mutes his precious Life:
In vain I felt his Corps for vital Warmth;
Breathless he lay upon a Heap of Slain,
Grappling a Sabre deeply drench'd in Blood:
A Croud of Slaves, ennobled by his Hand,

Ac.

Accompany'd his Fall, and like a Hero
He brav'd his Foes, and triumph'd even in Death.
But, Sir, since all is lost, we must be speedy
To save our selves, and make a quick Retreat.

Acom. My cruel Stars! to what am I reduc'd!

Madam, I feel your Loss in *Bajazet*;
It wou'd be fruitless now to offer Comfort;
Indulge your Fears, and give a loose to Sorrow.

Life is not worth my Care; but I must live
To save my Friends, intangled in my Guilt.

For you, fair Princess, whose disastrous Love
Wou'd melt the most obdurate Mind to pity;
If in some distant Climate you wou'd lose
The said Remembrance of this mournful Place;
My faithful Friend's shall wait upon your Will,
And guide you wherefo're your Wishes lead:

Think, Madam, while I yet command this Palace

Ata. Then farewell all! -- My groundless Jealousie
My base Suspicions, my capricious Fears,
And wicked Arts, have murder'd *Bajazet*.

Roxana and the Sultan both are Guiltless.

Have I then lov'd thee, only to destroy thee?
And can I bear the racking Thought and live!

—Enough, *Atalida*! — It must not be —

O ye immortal Spirits of his Race!

That hop'd to live again in *Bajazet*,
Whose Glory and Repose I have prophan'd:
Thou, Mother, who first gav'st his Heart to me,
Presaging Blessings from our early Loves:
Thou injur'd Vizier; you despairing Friends,
And thou *Roxana* — all assist my Purpose;
Urge on the Rage of my distracted Soul,
And take, at last, the Vengeance which I owe.

[Kills her.]

Osm. Wrest from her Hand the Poniard.

Ata. I have done.

Zara. Alas! she faints; she dies.

The SULTANESS.

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Acom. Unhappy Maid!

It had been cruel to prevent the Stroke,
Since Death alone cou'd finish thy Misfortunes.

Ata. Oh Bajazet! receive me, I am thine.

Zara. Oh, my lov'd Princess!

Acom. Our Companions wait;

The Galleys stand prepar'd; we must be gone.

Osmyn, do thou convey the Lovers hence;

Let their Remains be plac'd on Board my Vessel;

I will my self, in happier Climes, erect

Their lasting Monument; 'tis fit one Tomb

Should hold them both, whom Love and Fate have

join'd.

The Tyrant shall not, with a barbarous Pride,

His glorious Brother's mangled Corps deride:

In other Worlds Roxana shall despair,

And soft Atalida no Rival fear:

She of her faithful Bajazet possess'd,

Shall find, what greatly was on Earth confess'd,

In endless Paradise is greatly blest.

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F I N I S.



